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(54) **TUNGSTEN SILICIDE NITRIDE FILMS AND METHODS OF FORMATION**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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H01L 29/49 (2006.01)

H01L 21/285 (2006.01)

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search**

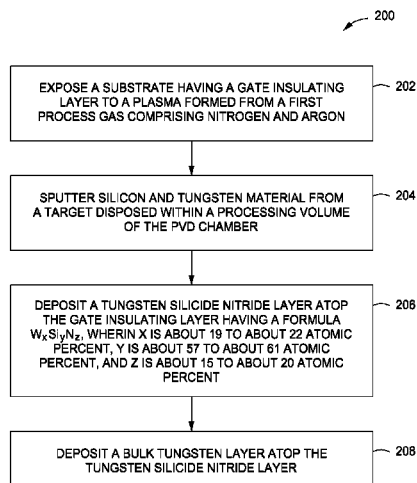
USPC 257/412
See application file for complete search history.

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ABSTRACT

Embodiments of the present disclosure include tungsten silicide nitride films and methods for depositing tungsten silicide nitride films. In some embodiments, a thin film microelectronic device includes a semiconductor substrate having a tungsten gate electrode stack comprising a tungsten silicide nitride film having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent. In some embodiments, a method of processing a substrate disposed in physical vapor deposition (PVD) chamber, includes: exposing a substrate having a gate insulating layer to a plasma formed from a first process gas comprising nitrogen and argon; sputtering silicon and tungsten material from a target disposed within a processing volume of the PVD chamber; depositing a tungsten silicide nitride layer atop the gate insulating layer having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent; and depositing a bulk tungsten layer atop the tungsten silicide nitride layer.

20 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



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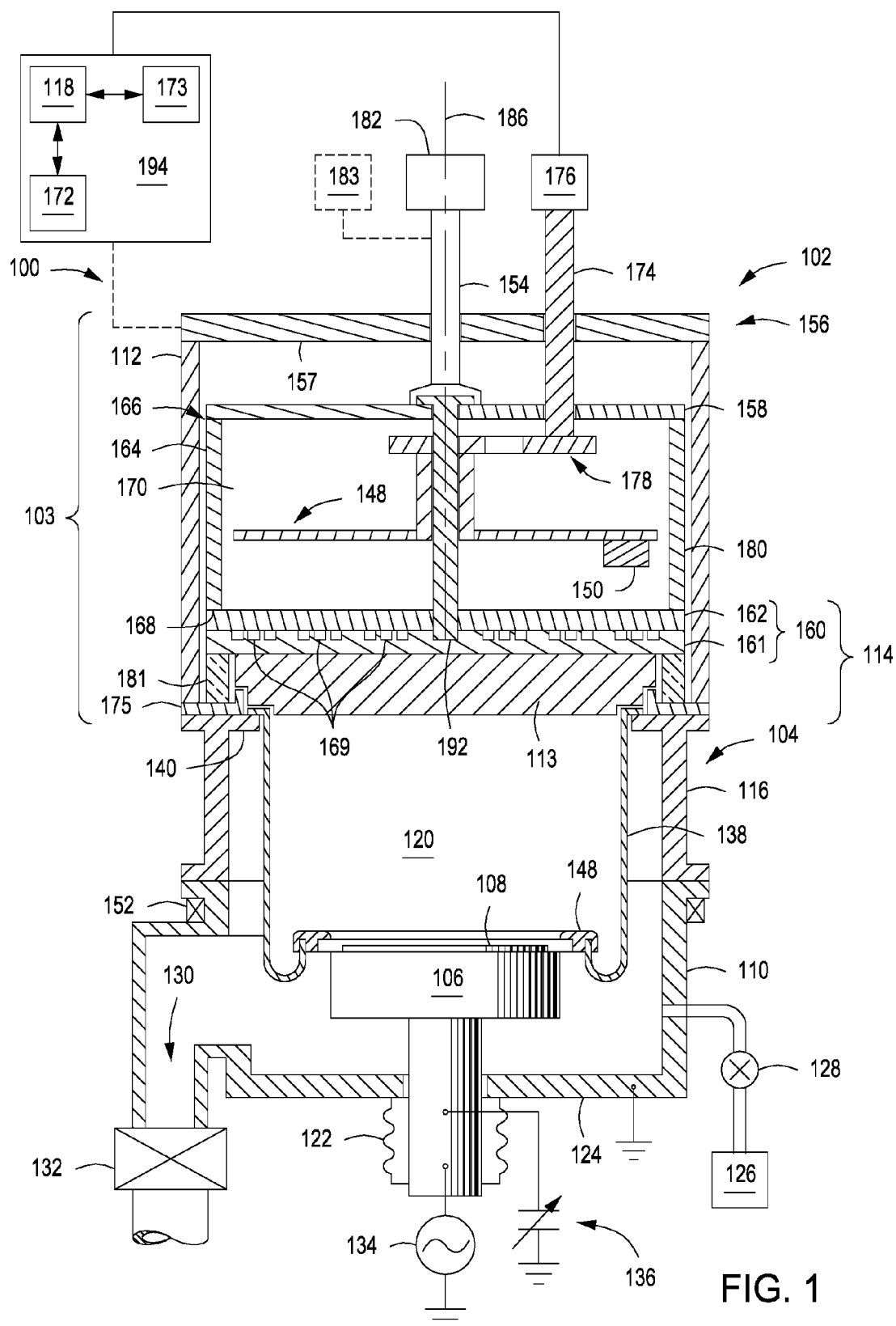


FIG. 1

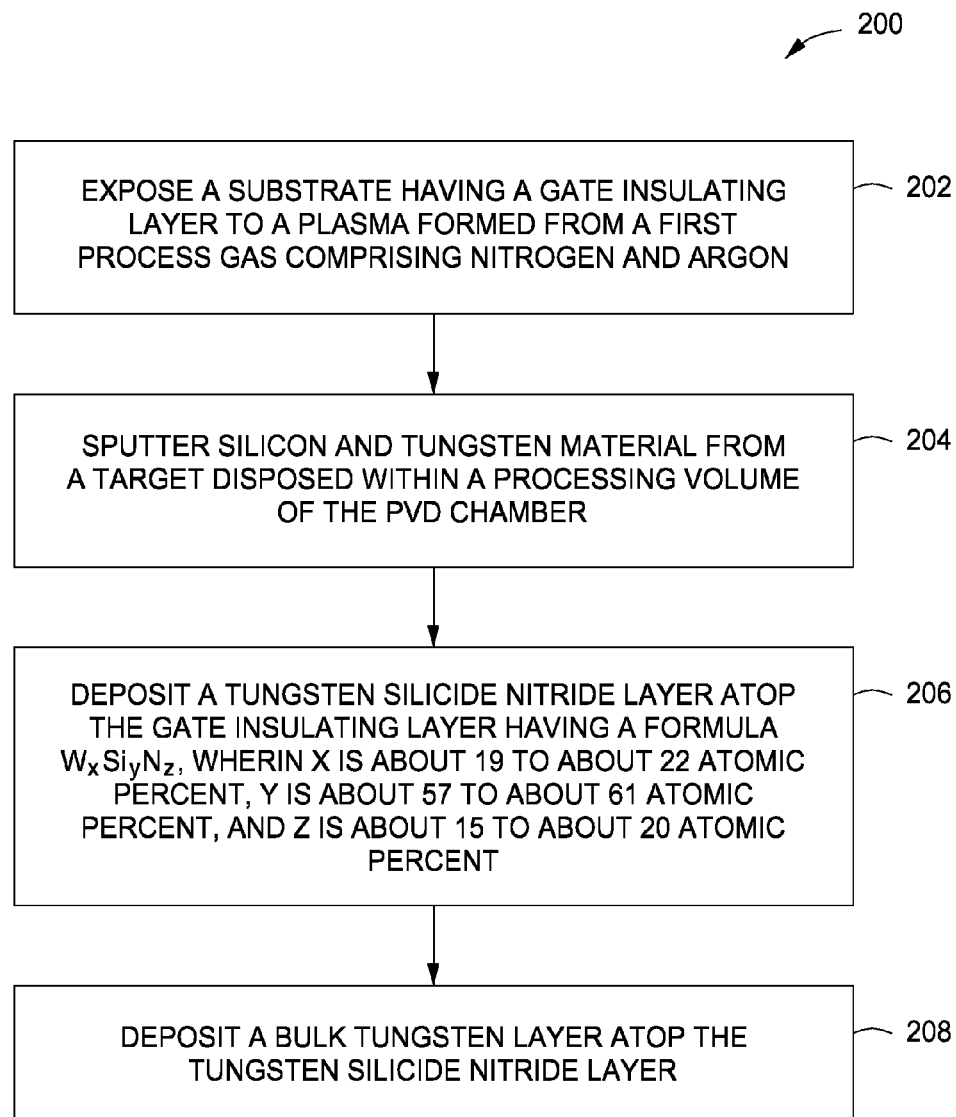


FIG. 2

FIG. 3A

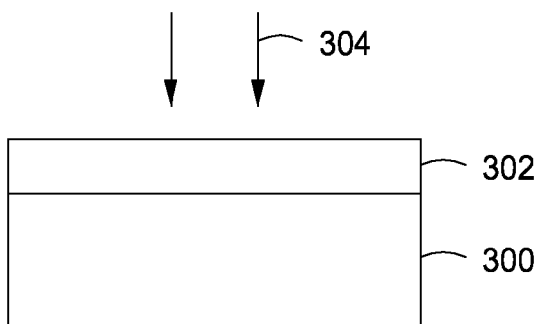


FIG. 3B

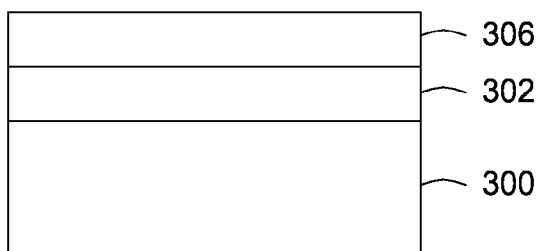
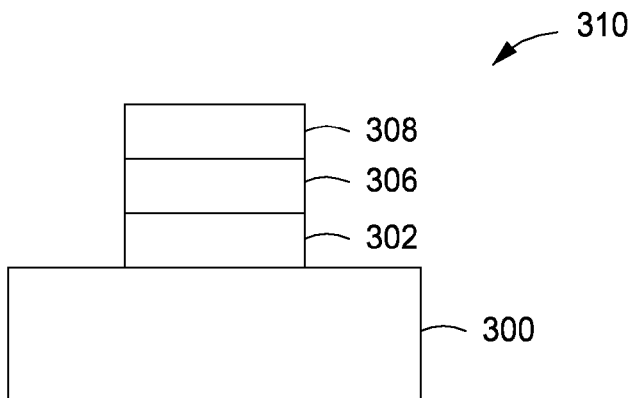


FIG. 3C



FIG. 3D



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TUNGSTEN SILICIDE NITRIDE FILMS AND METHODS OF FORMATION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims benefit of U.S. provisional patent application Ser. No. 62/217,443, filed Sep. 11, 2015, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD

Embodiments of the present disclosure generally relate to substrate processing systems and methods, and more particularly to tungsten silicide nitride films and methods for depositing tungsten silicide nitride films.

BACKGROUND

In the manufacture of integrated circuits, including dynamic random access memory (DRAM), tungsten (W) is frequently used as a gate conductor material. However, the integration of tungsten into semiconductor processing involves a number of significant challenges. For example, typical fabrication of a tungsten gate electrode stack involves forming a gate oxide layer on a silicon substrate such as by thermal oxidation or chemical vapor deposition (CVD). A subsequently deposited bulk tungsten film has a relatively poor adhesion to the gate oxide layer. Thus, an adhesion layer (i.e., a glue layer), such as tungsten silicide (WSi) or tungsten nitride (WN) is deposited onto the gate oxide layer prior to depositing the bulk tungsten film. However, the inventors have observed that the adhesion layer often exhibits unsatisfactory adhesion to the underlying oxide and the subsequently deposited bulk tungsten material and also fails to provide suitable resistivity of the gate stack.

Accordingly, the inventors have provided improved tungsten silicide nitride films and methods for depositing tungsten silicide nitride films useful, in a non-limiting example, for an adhesion layer in DRAM applications.

SUMMARY

Embodiments of the present disclosure include tungsten silicide nitride films and methods for depositing tungsten silicide nitride films. In some embodiments, a thin film microelectronic device includes a substrate having a tungsten gate electrode stack comprising a tungsten silicide nitride film having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent.

In some embodiments, a method of processing a substrate disposed in physical vapor deposition (PVD) chamber, includes: exposing a substrate having a gate insulating layer to a plasma formed from a first process gas comprising nitrogen and argon; sputtering silicon and tungsten material from a target disposed within a processing volume of the PVD chamber; depositing atop the gate insulating layer a tungsten silicide nitride layer having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent; and depositing a bulk tungsten layer atop the tungsten silicide nitride layer.

In some embodiments, a computer readable medium, having instructions stored thereon which, when executed, cause a physical vapor deposition process chamber to per-

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form a method of processing a substrate disposed atop a substrate support within the physical vapor deposition process chamber are provided herein. The method may include any of the embodiments disclosed herein.

Other and further embodiments of the present disclosure are described below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Embodiments of the present disclosure, briefly summarized above and discussed in greater detail below, can be understood by reference to the illustrative embodiments of the disclosure depicted in the appended drawings. However, the appended drawings illustrate only typical embodiments of the disclosure and are therefore not to be considered limiting of scope, for the disclosure may admit to other equally effective embodiments.

FIG. 1 depicts a schematic cross sectional view of a process chamber in accordance with some embodiments of the present disclosure.

FIG. 2 depicts a flowchart of a method of processing a substrate in accordance with some embodiments of the present disclosure.

FIGS. 3A-3D depict the stages of processing a substrate in accordance with some embodiments of the present disclosure.

To facilitate understanding, identical reference numerals have been used, where possible, to designate identical elements that are common to the figures. The figures are not drawn to scale and may be simplified for clarity. Elements and features of one embodiment may be beneficially incorporated in other embodiments without further recitation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present disclosure relates to tungsten silicide nitride films and methods for depositing tungsten silicide nitride films. In at least some embodiments, the inventive films and methods described herein advantageously reduce or eliminate peeling of tungsten deposited to form a tungsten gate electrode stack while maintaining suitable resistivity of the gate stack and maintaining substantially neutral substrate stress.

FIG. 1 depicts a simplified, cross-sectional view of an illustrative physical vapor deposition (PVD) processing system **100**, in accordance with some embodiments of the present disclosure. FIG. 2 depicts a flow chart of a method **200** for depositing a dielectric layer atop a substrate disposed in a physical vapor deposition process system of the type described in FIG. 1. The method **200** is described below with respect to the stages of processing a substrate as depicted in FIGS. 3A-3D. Examples of PVD chambers suitable for performing the method **200** described herein include the CIRRUS™, AVENIR™ and IMPULSE PVD processing chambers, all commercially available from Applied Materials, Inc., of Santa Clara, Calif.

The process chamber **104** depicted in FIG. 1 comprises a substrate support **106**, a target assembly **114** having an optional backing plate assembly **160** and source material **113** which is disposed on a substrate support facing side of the backing plate assembly **160**. Additional details relating to the illustrative PVD processing system **100** are discussed below.

Embodiments of the disclosure describe a thin film microelectronic device comprising a substrate, such as a semiconductor substrate, having a tungsten gate electrode stack disposed thereon. A tungsten gate electrode stack typically

comprises a gate oxide layer, an adhesion layer disposed atop the gate oxide layer and a bulk tungsten layer disposed atop the adhesion layer. Typically, the adhesion layer is titanium nitride, tungsten nitride or tungsten silicide. Typically, the bulk tungsten layer has a thickness of about 200 angstroms to about 250 angstroms. However, the inventors have observed that when depositing a thick bulk tungsten layer, for example about 2000 to about 5000 angstroms, an adhesion layer of tungsten nitride or tungsten silicide results in peeling of the tungsten bulk layer from atop the tungsten gate electrode stack, while the difference in grain size between the bulk tungsten layer and a titanium nitride adhesion layer results in poor stack resistivity (i.e. a stack resistivity of about $7.5 \mu\Omega\text{-cm}$ or greater).

Thus, the inventors have provided an adhesion layer that reduces or eliminates peeling of the bulk tungsten layer, and which provides good electrical resistivity, and neutral stress. The inventors have observed that depositing a tungsten silicide layer as an adhesion layer advantageously reduces or eliminates peeling of the bulk tungsten layer while providing a tungsten gate electrode stack resistivity of about 7.17 to about $7.27 \mu\Omega\text{-cm}$, which is within a suitable range of the resistivity of the tungsten gate electrode stack without the tungsten silicide nitride layer (i.e. about $6.85 \mu\Omega\text{-cm}$).

The method **200** begins at **202**, and as depicted in FIG. 3A, by exposing a substrate **300** having a gate insulating layer **302** to a plasma **304** formed from a first process gas comprising nitrogen and argon. In some embodiments, the substrate **300** may be composed of p-doped silicon, n-doped silicon, silicon-on-insulator or other suitable substrate materials. In some embodiments, the gate insulating layer **302** may be composed of oxide, silicon nitride, laminates of these or other well-known gate insulating film materials and may be fabricated by oxidation, CVD or other well-known techniques.

In some embodiments, the first process gas comprises about 3 sccm to about 10 sccm of nitrogen. The inventors performed numerous experiments to determine the proper range of nitrogen to provide the features of the adhesion layer described above. The inventors observed that adding less than about 3 sccm of nitrogen to the process gas failed to eliminate peeling of the subsequently deposited bulk tungsten layer. The inventors observed that adding about 3 sccm to about 10 sccm of nitrogen to the process gas eliminated peeling and provided the stack resistivity described above; however increasing the nitrogen flow rate above about 5 sccm resulted in undesirable compressive stresses on the tungsten gate electrode stack. Accordingly, in some embodiments, the first process gas comprises about 3 sccm to about 5 sccm of nitrogen. The inventors observed that adding about 3 sccm to about 5 sccm of nitrogen to the process gas eliminates peeling and provides the stack resistivity described above and provides a substantially neutral stress on the tungsten gate electrode stack. In some embodiments, the first process gas comprises about 40 sccm to about 45 sccm of argon. In some embodiments, forming the plasma **304** comprises applying about 500 to about 800 Watts of DC power to the target.

Next at **204**, silicon and tungsten material is sputtered from a target disposed within a processing volume of the PVD chamber, such as the physical vapor deposition (PVD) processing system **100** depicted in FIG. 1. In some embodiments, the target has a composition of about 33 wt % tungsten and about 66 wt. % silicon.

Next at **206**, as depicted in FIG. 3B, a tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306** is deposited atop the gate insulating layer **302**. The tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer

306 contains a sufficient amount of unbonded silicon atoms which adhere to the underlying gate insulating layer **302**, a sufficient amount of tungsten silicide to which the subsequently deposited bulk tungsten layer described below readily adheres, and a sufficient amount of nitrogen to control peeling and maintain the gate stack at substantially neutral stress. The inventors observed that while too little concentration of nitrogen fails to improve adhesion, too large of a concentration of nitrogen in the tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306** improved adhesion but also undesirably increased stack resistivity. Accordingly, the inventors have observed that a tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306** having the formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent advantageously reduces or eliminates peeling of subsequently deposited bulk tungsten material while maintaining suitable resistivity of the gate stack and maintaining substantially neutral stress of the gate stack. In some embodiments, the thickness of the tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306** is about 20-50 angstroms.

Next at **208**, and as depicted in FIG. 3C, a bulk tungsten layer **308** is deposited atop the tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306**. In some embodiments, the thickness of the bulk tungsten layer is about 2000 to about 5000 angstroms. The inventors have observed that traditional adhesion layers suitable for thinner bulk tungsten material, for example about 200 to about 250 angstroms, fail to provide adequate adhesion for a thicker bulk tungsten layer of about 2000 to about 5000 Angstroms. In some embodiments, the bulk tungsten layer **308** is deposited by a suitable PVD deposition process. In some embodiments, the PVD deposition process utilizes a plasma formed from a process gas, such as argon, to sputter material from a tungsten target. In some embodiments, the plasma is formed by applying a DC source power to the target, for example a source power of about 1600 to about 2000 watts. In some embodiments, a bias power of about 300 to about 400 watts is applied to the substrate **300**.

Following deposition of the bulk tungsten layer **308**, the method **200** generally ends and the substrate **300** may proceed for further processing. In some embodiments, subsequent processes such as deposition, etch, annealing, or the like may be performed to fabricate a finished device, such as a memory device. For example, following the method **200**, a suitable lithographic mask composed of suitable resist or other masking materials is patterned to yield a predetermined shape of the tungsten gate electrode stack **310** as depicted in FIG. 3D. The bulk tungsten layer **308**, the underlying tungsten silicide nitride adhesion layer **306** and the gate insulating layer **302** are etched using any suitable etch process, for example a fluorinated plasma etch process, to yield the tungsten gate electrode stack **310** depicted in FIG. 3D.

Returning to FIG. 1, a second energy source **183**, optionally coupled to the target assembly **114**, may provide DC power to the target assembly **114** to direct the plasma towards the target assembly **114**. In some embodiments, the DC power may range from about 200 W to about 20 kilowatts (kW), although the amount of DC power applied may vary depending upon chamber geometry (e.g., target size or the like). In some embodiments, the DC power may also be adjusted over the life of the target in the same manner as described above for the RF power. The DC power may be adjusted to control the deposition rate of sputtered metal atoms on the substrate. For example, increasing the DC power can result in increased interaction of the plasma with

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the source material **113** and increased sputtering of metal atoms from the target assembly **114**.

The PVD processing system **100** includes a chamber lid **102** removably disposed atop a process chamber **104**. The chamber lid **102** may include the target assembly **114** and a grounding assembly **103**. The process chamber **104** contains a substrate support **106** for receiving a substrate **108**. The substrate support **106** may be located within a lower grounded enclosure wall **110**, which may be a chamber wall of the process chamber **104**. The lower grounded enclosure wall **110** may be electrically coupled to the grounding assembly **103** of the chamber lid **102** such that an RF return path is provided to an RF power source **182** disposed above the chamber lid **102**. The RF power source **182** may provide RF energy to the target assembly **114** as discussed below. Alternatively or in combination a DC power source may be similarly coupled to target assembly **114**.

The PVD processing system **100** may include a source distribution plate **158** opposing a backside of the target assembly **114** and electrically coupled to the target assembly **114** along a peripheral edge of the target assembly **114**. The PVD processing system **100** may include a cavity **170** disposed between the backside of the target assembly **114** and the source distribution plate **158**. The cavity **170** may at least partially house a magnetron assembly **196** as discussed below. The cavity **170** is at least partially defined by the inner surface of a conductive support ring **164**, a target facing surface of the source distribution plate **158**, and a source distribution plate facing surface (e.g., backside) of the target assembly **114** (or backing plate assembly **160**).

The PVD processing system **100** further includes a magnetron assembly. The magnetron assembly provides a rotating magnetic field proximate the target assembly **114** to assist in plasma processing within the process chamber **104**. The magnetron assembly includes a rotatable magnet assembly **148** disposed within the cavity **170**. The rotatable magnet assembly **148** rotates about a central axis **186** of the process chamber **104**.

In some embodiments, the magnetron assembly includes a motor **176**, a motor shaft **174**, a gear assembly **178**, and the rotatable magnet assembly **148**. The rotatable magnet assembly **148** includes a plurality of magnets **150** and is configured to rotate the plurality of magnets **150** about the central axis **186** as described below. The motor **176** may be an electric motor, a pneumatic or hydraulic drive, or any other process-compatible mechanism that can provide suitable torque. While one illustrative embodiment is described herein to illustrate how the rotatable magnet assembly **148** may be rotated, other configurations may also be used.

In use, the magnetron assembly rotates the rotatable magnet assembly **148** within the cavity **170**. For example, in some embodiments, the motor **176**, motor shaft **174**, and gear assembly **178** may be provided to rotate the rotatable magnet assembly **148**. In some embodiments, the electrode **154** is aligned with the central axis **186** of the process chamber **104**, and motor shaft **174** of the magnetron may be disposed through an off-center opening in the ground plate **156**. The end of the motor shaft **174** protruding from the ground plate **156** is coupled to the motor **176**. The motor shaft **174** is further disposed through an off-center opening in the source distribution plate **158** and coupled to a gear assembly **178**.

The gear assembly **178** may be supported by any suitable means, such as by being coupled to a bottom surface of the source distribution plate **158**. The gear assembly **178** may be insulated from the source distribution plate **158** by fabricating at least the upper surface of the gear assembly **178** from

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a dielectric material, or by interposing an insulator layer (not shown) between the gear assembly **178** and the source distribution plate **158**, or the like, or by constructing the motor shaft **174** out of suitable dielectric material. The gear assembly **178** is further coupled to the rotatable magnet assembly **148** to transfer the rotational motion provided by the motor **176** to the rotatable magnet assembly **148**. The gear assembly **178** may be coupled to the rotatable magnet assembly **148** through the use of pulleys, gears, or other suitable means of transferring the rotational motion provided by the motor **176**.

The substrate support **106** has a material-receiving surface facing a principal surface of a target assembly **114** and supports the substrate **108** to be sputter coated in planar position opposite to the principal surface of the target assembly **114**. The substrate support **106** may support the substrate **108** in a processing region **120** of the process chamber **104**. The processing region **120** is defined as the region above the substrate support **106** during processing (for example, between the target assembly **114** and the substrate support **106** when in a processing position).

In some embodiments, the substrate support **106** may be vertically movable to allow the substrate **108** to be transferred onto the substrate support **106** through a load lock valve (not shown) in the lower portion of the process chamber **104** and thereafter raised to a deposition, or processing position. A bellows **122** connected to a bottom chamber wall **124** may be provided to maintain a separation of the inner volume of the process chamber **104** from the atmosphere outside of the process chamber **104** while facilitating vertical movement of the substrate support **106**. One or more gases may be supplied from a gas source **126** through a mass flow controller **128** into the lower part of the process chamber **104**. An exhaust port **130** may be provided and coupled to a pump (not shown) via a valve **132** for exhausting the interior of the process chamber **104** and to facilitate maintaining a suitable pressure inside the process chamber **104**.

The process chamber **104** further includes a process kit shield, or shield, **138** to surround the processing volume, or central region, of the process chamber **104** and to protect other chamber components from damage and/or contamination from processing. In some embodiments, the shield **138** may be connected to a ledge **140** of an upper grounded enclosure wall **116** of the process chamber **104**. As illustrated in FIG. 1, the chamber lid **102** may rest on the ledge **140** of the upper grounded enclosure wall **116**. Similar to the lower grounded enclosure wall **110**, the upper grounded enclosure wall **116** may provide a portion of the RF return path between the lower grounded enclosure wall **116** and the grounding assembly **103** of the chamber lid **102**. However, other RF return paths are possible, such as via the grounded shield **138**.

The shield **138** extends downwardly and may include a generally tubular portion having a generally constant diameter that generally surrounds the processing region **120**. The shield **138** extends along the walls of the upper grounded enclosure wall **116** and the lower grounded enclosure wall **110** downwardly to below a top surface of the substrate support **106** and returns upwardly until reaching a top surface of the substrate support **106** (e.g., forming a u-shaped portion at the bottom of the shield **138**). A cover ring **146** rests on the top of an upwardly extending inner portion of the shield **138** when the substrate support **106** is in the lower, loading position but rests on the outer periphery of the substrate support **106** when the substrate support is in the upper, deposition position to protect the substrate sup-

port **106** from sputter deposition. An additional deposition ring (not shown) may be used to protect the edges of the substrate support **106** from deposition around the edge of the substrate **108**.

In some embodiments, a magnet **152** may be disposed about the process chamber **104** for selectively providing a magnetic field between the substrate support **106** and the target assembly **114**. For example, as shown in FIG. 1, the magnet **152** may be disposed about the outside of the enclosure wall **110** in a region just above the substrate support **106** when in processing position. In some embodiments, the magnet **152** may be disposed additionally or alternatively in other locations, such as adjacent the upper grounded enclosure wall **116**. The magnet **152** may be an electromagnet and may be coupled to a power source (not shown) for controlling the magnitude of the magnetic field generated by the electromagnet.

The chamber lid **102** generally includes the grounding assembly **103** disposed about the target assembly **114**. The grounding assembly **103** may include a grounding plate **156** having a first surface **157** that may be generally parallel to and opposite a backside of the target assembly **114**. A grounding shield **112** may extend from the first surface **157** of the grounding plate **156** and surround the target assembly **114**. The grounding assembly **103** may include a support member **175** to support the target assembly **114** within the grounding assembly **103**.

In some embodiments, the support member **175** may be coupled to a lower end of the grounding shield **112** proximate an outer peripheral edge of the support member **175** and extends radially inward to support a seal ring **181**, and the target assembly **114**. The seal ring **181** may be a ring or other annular shape having a suitable cross-section. The seal ring **181** may include two opposing planar and generally parallel surfaces to facilitate interfacing with the target assembly **114**, such as the backing plate assembly **160**, on a first side of the seal ring **181** and with the support member **175** on a second side of the seal ring **181**. The seal ring **181** may be made of a dielectric material, such as ceramic. The seal ring **181** may insulate the target assembly **114** from the ground assembly **103**.

The support member **175** may be a generally planar member having a central opening to accommodate the target assembly **114**. In some embodiments, the support member **175** may be circular, or disc-like in shape, although the shape may vary depending upon the corresponding shape of the chamber lid and/or the shape of the substrate to be processed in the PVD processing system **100**.

The target assembly **114** may comprise a source material **113**, such as a metal, metal oxide, metal alloy, or the like, to be deposited on a substrate, such as the substrate **108** during sputtering. In some embodiments, the target assembly **114** may be fabricated substantially from the source material **113**, without any backing plate to support the source material **113**. In some embodiments, the target assembly **114** includes a backing plate assembly **160** to support the source material **113**. The source material **113** may be disposed on a substrate support facing side of the backing plate assembly **160** as illustrated in FIG. 1. The backing plate assembly **160** may comprise a conductive material, such as copper-zinc, copper-chrome, or the same material as the target, such that RF and DC power can be coupled to the source material **113** via the backing plate assembly **160**. Alternatively, the backing plate assembly **160** may be non-conductive and may include conductive elements (not shown) such as electrical feedthroughs or the like.

In some embodiments, the backing plate assembly **160** includes a first backing plate **161** and a second backing plate **162**. The first backing plate **161** and the second backing plate **162** may be disc shaped, rectangular, square, or any other shape that may be accommodated by the PVD processing system **100**. A front side of the first backing plate **161** is configured to support the source material **113** such that a front surface of the source material opposes the substrate **108** when present. The source material **113** may be coupled to the first backing plate **161** in any suitable manner. For example, in some embodiments, the source material **113** may be diffusion bonded to the first backing plate **161**.

A plurality of sets of channels **169** may be disposed between the first backing plate **161** and second backing plate **162**. The first backing plate **161** and second backing plate **162** may be coupled together to form a substantially water tight seal (e.g., a fluid seal between the first and second backing plates) to prevent leakage of coolant provided to the plurality of sets of channels **169**. In some embodiments, the target assembly **114** may further comprise a central support member **192** to support the target assembly **114** within the process chamber **104**.

In some embodiments, the conductive support ring **164** may be disposed between the source distribution plate **158** and the backside of the target assembly **114** to propagate RF energy from the source distribution plate to the peripheral edge of the target assembly **114**. The conductive support ring **164** may be cylindrical, with a first end **166** coupled to a target-facing surface of the source distribution plate **158** proximate the peripheral edge of the source distribution plate **158** and a second end **168** coupled to a source distribution plate-facing surface of the target assembly **114** proximate the peripheral edge of the target assembly **114**. In some embodiments, the second end **168** is coupled to a source distribution plate facing surface of the backing plate assembly **160** proximate the peripheral edge of the backing plate assembly **160**.

An insulative gap **180** is provided between the grounding plate **156** and the outer surfaces of the source distribution plate **158**, the conductive support ring **164**, and the target assembly **114** (and/or backing plate assembly **160**). The insulative gap **180** may be filled with air or some other suitable dielectric material, such as a ceramic, a plastic, or the like. The distance between the grounding plate **156** and the source distribution plate **158** depends on the dielectric material between the grounding plate **156** and the source distribution plate **158**. Where the dielectric material is predominantly air, the distance between the grounding plate **156** and the source distribution plate **158** may be between about 15 mm and about 40 mm.

The grounding assembly **103** and the target assembly **114** may be electrically separated by the seal ring **181** and by one or more of insulators (not shown) disposed between the first surface **157** of the grounding plate **156** and the backside of the target assembly **114**, e.g., a non-target facing side of the source distribution plate **158**.

The PVD processing system **100** has an RF power source **182** connected to an electrode **154** (e.g., a RF feed structure). The electrode **154** may pass through the grounding plate **156** and is coupled to the source distribution plate **158**. The RF power source **182** may include an RF generator and a matching circuit, for example, to minimize reflected RF energy reflected back to the RF generator during operation. For example, RF energy supplied by the RF power source **182** may range in frequency from about 13.56 MHz to about

162 MHz or above. For example, non-limiting frequencies such as 13.56 MHz, 27.12 MHz, 40.68 MHz, 60 MHz, or 162 MHz can be used.

In some embodiments, PVD processing system 100 may include a second energy source 183 to provide additional energy to the target assembly 114 during processing. In some embodiments, the second energy source 183 may be a DC power source or a pulsed DC power source to provide DC energy, for example, to enhance a sputtering rate of the target material (and hence, a deposition rate on the substrate). In some embodiments, the second energy source 183 may be a second RF power source, similar to the RF power source 182, to provide RF energy, for example, at a second frequency different than a first frequency of RF energy provided by the RF power source 182. In embodiments where the second energy source 183 is a DC power source, the second energy source may be coupled to the target assembly 114 in any location suitable to electrically couple the DC energy to the target assembly 114, such as the electrode 154 or some other conductive member (such as the source distribution plate 158, discussed below). In embodiments where the second energy source 183 is a second RF power source, the second energy source may be coupled to the target assembly 114 via the electrode 154.

The electrode 154 may be cylindrical or otherwise rod-like and may be aligned with a central axis 186 of the process chamber 104 (e.g., the electrode 154 may be coupled to the target assembly at a point coincident with a central axis of the target, which is coincident with the central axis 186). The electrode 154, aligned with the central axis 186 of the process chamber 104, facilitates applying RF energy from the RF power source 182 to the target assembly 114 in an axisymmetrical manner (e.g., the electrode 154 may couple RF energy to the target at a "single point" aligned with the central axis of the PVD chamber). The central position of the electrode 154 helps to eliminate or reduce deposition asymmetry in substrate deposition processes. The electrode 154 may have any suitable diameter. For example, although other diameters may be used, in some embodiments, the diameter of the electrode 154 may be about 0.5 to about 2 inches. The electrode 154 may generally have any suitable length depending upon the configuration of the PVD chamber. In some embodiments, the electrode may have a length of between about 0.5 to about 12 inches. The electrode 154 may be fabricated from any suitable conductive material, such as aluminum, copper, silver, or the like. Alternatively, in some embodiments, the electrode 154 may be tubular. In some embodiments, the diameter of the electrode 154 may be suitable, for example, to facilitate providing a central shaft for the magnetron.

The electrode 154 may pass through the ground plate 156 and is coupled to the source distribution plate 158. The ground plate 156 may comprise any suitable conductive material, such as aluminum, copper, or the like. The open spaces between the one or more insulators (not shown) allow for RF wave propagation along the surface of the source distribution plate 158. In some embodiments, the one or more insulators may be symmetrically positioned with respect to the central axis 186 of the PVD processing system. Such positioning may facilitate symmetric RF wave propagation along the surface of the source distribution plate 158 and, ultimately, to a target assembly 114 coupled to the source distribution plate 158. The RF energy may be provided in a more symmetric and uniform manner as compared to conventional PVD chambers due, at least in part, to the central position of the electrode 154.

The PVD processing system 100 may further comprise an RF bias power source 134 coupled to the substrate support 106 in order to induce a bias on the substrate 108. The PVD processing system 100 may further comprise a substrate support impedance circuit, such as auto capacitance tuner 136, coupled to the substrate support 106 for adjusting voltage on the substrate 108. For example, the auto capacitance tuner 136 may be used to control the voltage on the substrate 108, and thus, the substrate current (e.g., ion energy at the substrate level).

A controller 194 may be provided and coupled to various components of the PVD processing system 100 to control the operation thereof. The controller 194 includes a central processing unit (CPU) 118, a memory 172, and support circuits 173. The controller 194 may control the PVD processing system 100 directly, or via computers (or controllers) associated with particular process chamber and/or support system components. The controller 194 may be any form of general-purpose computer processor that can be used in an industrial setting for controlling various chambers and sub-processors. The memory, or computer readable medium, 172 of the controller 194 may be one or more of readily available memory such as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), floppy disk, hard disk, optical storage media (e.g., compact disc or digital video disc), flash drive, or any other form of digital storage, local or remote. The support circuits 173 are coupled to the CPU 118 for supporting the processor in a conventional manner. These circuits include cache, power supplies, clock circuits, input/output circuitry and subsystems, and the like. Inventive methods as described herein, such as the method 200, may be stored in the memory 264 as software routine that may be executed or invoked to control the operation of the PVD processing system 100 in the manner described herein. The software routine may also be stored and/or executed by a second CPU (not shown) that is remotely located from the hardware being controlled by the CPU 118.

While the foregoing is directed to particular embodiments of the present disclosure, other and further embodiments of the disclosure may be devised without departing from the basic scope of the disclosure.

The invention claimed is:

1. A thin film microelectronic device, comprising:
 - a substrate having a tungsten gate electrode stack comprising a tungsten silicide nitride film having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent.
2. The thin film microelectronic device of claim 1, wherein the tungsten gate electrode stack further comprises a gate oxide layer atop the substrate and the tungsten silicide nitride film disposed atop the gate oxide layer.
3. The thin film microelectronic device of claim 2, wherein the tungsten gate electrode stack further comprises a bulk tungsten layer atop the tungsten silicide nitride film.
4. The thin film microelectronic device of claim 3, wherein a thickness of the bulk tungsten layer is about 2000 to about 5000 angstroms.
5. The thin film microelectronic device of claim 1, wherein a thickness of the tungsten silicide nitride film is about 20 to about 50 angstroms.
6. The thin film microelectronic device of claim 1, wherein the tungsten gate electrode stack has a resistivity of about 7.17 to about 7.27 $\mu\Omega\text{-cm}$.
7. A method of processing a substrate disposed in physical vapor deposition (PVD) chamber, comprising:

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- exposing a substrate having a gate insulating layer to a plasma formed from a first process gas comprising nitrogen and argon;
- sputtering silicon and tungsten material from a target disposed within a processing volume of the PVD chamber;
- depositing atop the gate insulating layer a tungsten silicide nitride layer having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent; and
- depositing a bulk tungsten layer atop the tungsten silicide nitride layer.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein a thickness of the tungsten silicide nitride layer is about 20 to about 50 angstroms.
9. The method of claim 7, wherein a thickness of the bulk tungsten layer is about 2000 to about 5000 Angstroms.
10. The method of claim 7, wherein the target has a composition of about 33 wt % tungsten and about 66 wt. % silicon.
11. The method of claim 7, wherein the first process gas comprises about 3 sccm to about 5 sccm of nitrogen.
12. The method of claim 7, wherein the first process gas comprises about 40 sccm to about 45 sccm of argon.
13. The method of claim 7, wherein forming the plasma from the first process gas comprises applying about 500 to about 800 watts of DC power to the target.
14. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
forming a patterned resist layer atop the bulk tungsten layer; and
etching the bulk tungsten layer, tungsten silicide nitride adhesion and gate insulating layer to form a tungsten gate electrode stack.
15. The method of claim 14, wherein the tungsten gate electrode stack has a resistivity of about 7.17 to about 7.27 $\mu\Omega$ -cm.

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16. A computer readable medium, having instructions stored thereon which, when executed, cause a physical vapor deposition process chamber to perform a method of processing a substrate disposed atop a substrate support within the physical vapor deposition process chamber, the method comprising:
- exposing a substrate having a gate insulating layer to a plasma formed from a first process gas comprising nitrogen and argon;
- sputtering silicon and tungsten material from a target disposed within a processing volume of the PVD chamber;
- depositing a tungsten silicide nitride layer atop the gate insulating layer having a formula $W_xSi_yN_z$, wherein x is about 19 to about 22 atomic percent, y is about 57 to about 61 atomic percent, and z is about 15 to about 20 atomic percent; and
- depositing a bulk tungsten layer atop the tungsten silicide nitride layer.
17. The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein depositing the tungsten silicide nitride layer comprises depositing the tungsten silicide nitride layer to a thickness of about 20 to about 50 angstroms.
18. The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein depositing the bulk tungsten layer comprises depositing the bulk tungsten layer to a thickness of about 5000 angstroms.
19. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising:
forming a patterned resist layer atop the bulk tungsten layer; and
etching the bulk tungsten layer, tungsten silicide nitride adhesion and gate insulating layer to form a tungsten gate electrode stack.
20. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the tungsten gate electrode stack has a resistivity of about 7.17 to about 7.27 $\mu\Omega$ -cm.

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